

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT *Refine*

TO : Assistant Director, Reports and Estimates DATE: 24 March 1948

FROM : Deputy Assistant Director, Reports and Estimates

SUBJECT: Proposed Organization of Current Intelligence Group to Produce
Current Intelligence

1. From time to time the proposal is made that Current Intelligence be produced in its entirety by a Current Intelligence Group. This question has again been posed and, therefore, it seems desirable to examine the subject in some detail in the hope that a fresh examination will lead to a clearer perception of the problem.

2. Before trying to weigh the merits of the proposed current intelligence production scheme against those of the system presently in use, it seems well to try to set forth the concept governing our production and presentation of this form of intelligence. If the concept is in error in any important particular, it logically follows that our method of production and presentation is probably wrong and therefore should be amended. In producing and presenting current intelligence we have hitherto operated on the concept that only those items of intelligence information and our comment thereon should be presented that

a. indicate a possible or probable significant alteration of an hitherto existing and well understood situation

b. indicate a possibly or probably new and hitherto un-noted development of a situation

c. are important land marks of the progressive development of a situation

d. call attention to the continuing existence of an important situation whose currently static nature might lead to its being lost sight of - This last should be used sparingly.

It is emphasized that we are not presenting news or even a digest of intelligence information received over any set period of time. No item should appear in any of our Current Intelligence publications unless it fulfills one or more of the four conditions (a. to d. inclusive) listed above. In the execution of this concept

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a high degree of substantive competence is required in the handling of current intelligence as each item is in a sense an estimate. Furthermore, the need for a more exhaustive estimate or re-estimate of a situation or condition should become apparent from the constant appraisal and examination of current intelligence information. In other words, the need for an estimate becomes apparent and it is prepared forthwith as a result of our production of Current Intelligence.

3. In accordance with the foregoing concept and under present procedures, Current Intelligence is produced in the first instance by each Regional Branch or other major subdivision of ORE. The Branch initiating an item of Current Intelligence is expected to consult with other Branches and with personnel of the various panels of consultants as appropriate in order to insure thorough and competent consideration of the various problems and trends indicated by any given item of intelligence information. A consultative and advisory staff known as the Current Intelligence Group is provided in order to

- a. assure that ^{one or more of} the four conditions for Current Intelligence are met by each item presented in Current Intelligence publications.
- b. assure that suitable substantive coordination has been accomplished in each case
- c. assure that the items are presented in prescribed format
- d. make suggestions in regard to wording and modes of expression
- e. handle matters of publication and distribution.

The Assistant Director for Reports and Estimates is the final editorial authority and makes necessary editorial decisions.

4. Organizationally the proposal that Current Intelligence be produced and presented by a separate Current Intelligence Group will require

- a. greatly augmenting the staff of the Current Intelligence Group by the addition of a very considerable body of substantive specialists

or alternatively

b. an augmentation of staff by the addition of three or four high level substantive specialists roughly representative of each of our present Branches and Panels who would constantly consult with the various major sub-divisions (30 to 40 specialists plus clerical help - a total of 60 to 80 people).

Under proposal (b) above there might be some but not very much diminution of personnel required by the various Branches and Panels now existing as these would still be required to produce CIA Staff Intelligence.

c. Another organizational possibility suggests itself - i.e., to reorganize throughout on the basis of

- (1) Current Intelligence
- (2) Staff Intelligence

each with a chief of the rank of Deputy Director to independently handle the production and presentation of those fields of intelligence. Such an organizational arrangement would in a sense be mutually duplicative and require considerably more personnel than the present organization.

d. Proposal (b) would seem to be the organizational system that would require least increase of personnel and least increase of duplication. It has the disadvantage, however, of tending to diffuse responsibility for substantive judgements and results.

5. The proposal for producing Current Intelligence by a separate Current Intelligence Group offers the following advantages:

- a. Gives a compact integrated group of personnel considering a single general type of intelligence.
- b. Promotes ease and promptness in the production of Current Intelligence.
- c. Facilitates the prompt physical handling of Current Intelligence materials.
- d. Provides competent substantive consideration of events but only if the staff is very heavily augmented by substantive specialists.
- e. Reduces friction between differing points of view but only if the Chief of the Current Intelligence Group is

delegated in effect the final editorial authority now vested in the Assistant Director.

6. The system for Current Intelligence production now in force provides the following advantages:

- a. Economy of personnel.
- b. Thorough substantive consideration but only to the extent that Branch Chiefs cooperate or that such cooperation is imposed on them.
- c. Provides for the natural development of intelligence from Current to Staff.
- d. Places definite responsibility for Current Intelligence production on definite groups of substantively competent people.
- e. Maintains direct control of Current Intelligence in the hands of the Assistant Director.
- f. Gives a better over-all view of intelligence needs and problems in each general area of intelligence.

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